

WNTC SEEKS LICENSE AND INCORPORATION

by Paul Gerstenberger

WTSC-FM.

Steps are now being taken to provide the Potsdam listening area with its own 'new' commercial radio station. It is only a somewhat new radio station, because WNTC has been on the air since March of 1948; however, this is the first attempt to become licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC);

Since the Federal Communications Commission lifted the freeze on accepting applications for AM licenses a little more than six months ago, a group of Inter-College Radio Network (ICRN) members have been laying the groundwork to increase the number of outlets available to the students of both Clarkson and Potsdam State, by attempting to license WNTC.

If the ICRN/WNTC application is accepted by the FCC, students will benefit by an increase in listening area and revenues, and the addition of 'professionalism' to an already-established student organization.

At this point in time, many questions remain unanswered, one of the more important being: can it be done? As stated by the FCC, "Any qualified citizen, firm, or group may apply", but they must satisfy the requirements of being "legally, technically and financially qualified... (and operate) in the public interest" before licensing by the FCC.

Late in 1963, another student-operated radio station, WCCT, made its application to the FCC in order to change its status from carrier current AM to educational FM. This request was granted to the Board of Trustees of Clarkson College, who made the formal application on behalf of WCCT, and the name was changed to

Essentially, this is what the ICRN members are trying to accomplish for WNTC (except of course, that their goal is an AM commercial license); however, Clarkson College supposedly does not have the interest for holding and being responsible for a commercial station.

The only alternative, at this time, is for the members of ICRN to make the application to the FCC, in their own names. This solution, however, brings up other problems that are not so easy to work around.

Will the FCC look upon the members of ICRN as a legally, financially, and professionally qualified group? It may be extremely difficult for a student-run organization, consisting of persons with little or no experience, to prove its capabilities to a federal branch devoted to the art of red tape and instant laws.

An attempt to bypass this problem is not only being considered but has been started, and that is to turn the ICRN (a student organization) into a 'non-profit' private corporation.

Original problems are now just being compounded by more problems. Legal questions have

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been raised, without answers and attempts to file for actions can not be made without the final go-ahead from both students senates (CCSA & SGA).

The lack of understanding by the student senators is holding up the progress and action, but even if the ICRN can move on its attempt to obtain certification of incorporation for ICRN, there are other questions.

One problem concerns the fact that if ICRN was incorporated with students named to its board of directors, such a board would be subject to change each year, which might be a disqualifying factor in obtaining a commercial radio station license.

Finally, there is a question of whether a non-profit corporation can hold a commercial license.